GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5545
ANSWERED ON:16.05.2007
TALKS BETWEEN INDIA AND EU ON TRADE & INVESTMENT
Bhadana Shri Avtar Singh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any talks were held recently with the European Union for entering into agreements in the field of trade and investment sectors;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) to (c) No talks have been held recently with the European Union (EU) for entering into an agreement in the field of trade and investment sectors. There is however a background to this matter. The 7th India-EU Summit, at the level of our Prime Minister and the Presidency of the European Union, was held in October 2006 in Helsinki. A High Level Trade Group (HLTG), which had been established between India and EU to explore the possibility of a bilateral broad-based trade and investment agreement, submitted its report to the Summit. The Summit agreed that both sides move towards negotiations for such an agreement. Formal negotiations are yet to begin, as under the procedures of the EU, the European Commission was required to obtain an authorisation from the Council of Ministers of the EU. This authorisation has been granted by the EU Council recently on 23 April 2007.

Subsequent to the Summit in October 2006, the India-EU HLTG has met twice in December 2006 and February 2007. These meetings were not in the nature of negotiations towards an agreement.